DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 332 943 SO 030 151

AUTHOR Lewis, Linda; Linton, Stephen
TITLE Approaches to Teaching about Korea in a World Cultures Social Studies Curriculum. A guide for Teachers.
INSTITUTION Columbia Univ., New York, N.Y. East Asian Inst.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-913418-15-3
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 16p.; For related documents, see ED 323 133, SO 030 086, SO 030 140-144, and SO 030 152.
AVAILABLE FROM East Asian Curriculum Project, Columbia University, East Asian Institute, 420 West 118th St. New York, NY 10027.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Area Studies; *Asian Studies; Curriculum Development; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Global Approach; Instructional Materials; Social Studies; Teaching Guides; Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Global Education; *Korea

ABSTRACT

Korea, a country of major significance within the East Asian culture sphere, is also a country of historical and contemporary importance to the United States. Divided in 1945 into two zones, the North and the South, the communist northern sector became a formidable economic and military power, while the phenomenal growth of the southern sector's economy has made South Korea a Third World development success story, and the economic and cultural ties between the United States and South Korea continue to grow. This teaching guide suggests approaches for teachers who, although unable to devote an entire unit to the study of Korea, may wish to include Korea in a unit on East Asia. The guide contains three sections: (1) Korea--cultural transformer and transmitter; (2) Korea--vortex of conflict; and (3) Korea--division and reunification (South Korea, modern economic power; North Korea, bastion of communism and self-reliance; reunification, the common dream). A timeline and maps of the country are also included. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED332943

APPROACHES TO TEACHING ABOUT

KOREA

IN A WORLD CULTURES SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
ROBERTA MARTIN
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 030 151

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPROACHES TO TEACHING

ABOUT

KOREA

Linda Lewis and Stephen Linton
Consultants

Roberta Martin
Series Editor

in consultation with
Allan Song

Michael Chambers
Production Consultant

EAST ASIAN CURRICULUM PROJECT (EACP) -- COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

LINDA LEWIS is an anthropologist on the faculty of Smith College and a specialist on law in Korean society.

STEPHEN LINTON is Associate Director of the Center for Korean Research at Columbia University. He holds a doctorate in religion, specializing on Korea.

ROBERTA MARTIN is the director of the East Asian Curriculum Project and the editor also of *Resources on Korea*, *Contemporary Japan: A Teaching Workbook*, *Lesson Plans on Japan*, *Elementary Level Resources on Japan*, *Central Themes for a Unit on China*, *China: A Teaching Workbook*, *Approaches to Teaching about Southeast Asia*, and *Central Themes for a Unit on South Asia*.

ALLAN SONG is a doctoral candidate in political science at Columbia University and a specialist in East Asian international relations.

MICHAEL CHAMBERS holds a masters degree in international affairs from Columbia University, with a specialization in the international politics of East Asia.

This publication was made possible by grants from the United States Department of Education. The East Asian Curriculum Project remains solely responsible for its contents.

• 1989 by the Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York.
ISBN 0-913418-15-3

EA CP East Asian Curriculum Project
Columbia University, East Asian Institute, 420 W. 118th Street, New York, NY 10027

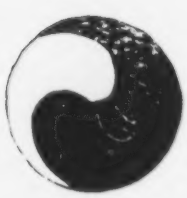
INTRODUCTION

Korea is a fascinating country with a long and impressive cultural tradition that is of major significance within the East Asian cultural sphere. It is also a nation of historical and contemporary importance to the United States.

The growing interest in the study of Korea and the increasing economic and culture ties between the United States and South Korea come at a time, however, when there is burgeoning demand on the world cultures curriculum from many quarters.

The approaches suggested here are therefore proposed for teachers who, although unable to devote an entire unit to the study of Korea, wish to include Korea in a unit on East Asia. Students can be introduced to Korea as a leading member of the East Asian community, along with its neighbors China and Japan, and as a leading member of the "NICs," or "Newly Industrializing Countries" of Asia, about whom our students will certainly hear more in the years to come.

A list of curriculum materials is appended to this guide. These materials provide classroom options for those devoting a few classes as well as for those devoting several weeks or months to the study of Korea.



CONTENTS

I KOREA: CULTURAL TRANSFORMER AND TRANSMITTER

II KOREA: VORTEX OF CONFLICT

III KOREA: DIVISION AND REUNIFICATION

- **A.** South Korea: Modern Economic Power
- **B.** North Korea: Bastion of Communism and Self Reliance
- **C.** Reunification: The Common Dream

TIMELINE

MAP

RESOURCE LIST

TEACHING ABOUT KOREA

I Korea as a Cultural Transformer and Transmitter

The Korean term for peninsula (***bando***) means literally "half-island". Historically, Korea, connected to the Asian continent on the north and pointing across the sea towards Japan on the south, has exhibited the characteristics of both a maritime and a continental nation. As a unique culture in its own right as well as a bridge between the Asian continent and Japan, Korea has served as a center for ***transforming*** Chinese traditions to fit its own needs before ***transmitting*** them to Japan. This is particularly true of Buddhism and Confucianism.

The closest access of China to Japan is across open sea, and historically, it would have been hard for the two to interact without a middle ground. Korea has played an important role as link between Japan and the mainland.

Through Korea, elements of Chinese civilization, including Chinese script, Confucianism, and Buddhism (in forms developed in China after its origination in India) were modified before being passed to Japan. Thus Korea played a vital role in creating the East Asian cultural sphere that encompassed what are today the countries of China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam.

A. ***Buddhism*** reached Korea via China during the Three Kingdoms Period (4th - 7th c.), bringing with it many other secular elements of Chinese culture. As the "state religion" of the period, Buddhism provided legitimacy for Korea's rulers and helped in the forging of a unified state. It was also important in the development of Korea art and architecture, literature, and the performing arts. This religious and cultural heritage was transmitted to Japan by Koreans in the 6th century.

B. ***Confucianism*** first came to Korea from China in the 6th and 7th centuries. In this period, Confucianism was primarily limited to the study of Chinese classical texts, although several institutions associated with Confucian philosophy in China, in particular the examination system for government service and the civil bureaucracy, were also adopted in Korea. In the 12th century, Confucianism in China underwent a Neo-Confucian revival, following the moral and philosophical theories of the 12th century Chinese philosopher Chu Hsi. The teachings of Chu Hsi were known in Korea in the late 13th century; it was not until the beginning of the Yi Dynasty, in 1392 however, that Neo-Confucian principles were consciously adopted to replace Buddhism as the basis for Korea's sociopolitical order. Late in the 16th century Neo-Confucian philosophy was transmitted to Japan where it served as an intellectual foundation for the social, political, and educational policies of the Tokugawa government.

II Korea as a Vortex of Conflict

Because it is located between the two major powers in East Asia, Korea has also been a focus of confrontation. Often, the question of which nation/s and what culture/s will dominate East Asia has been settled in Korea.

- The Mongols occupied Korea between 1231-1273. Using Korean resources and manpower, they launched two unsuccessful amphibious assaults on Japan from the southern tip of the peninsula. Partially as a result of these failures, the Mongol empire collapsed and China regained its former dominant position in East Asia.

- Twice between 1592-1598 Japan invaded Korea in an attempt to conquer China. Koreans and

Chinese combined their forces to turn back Japanese troops but not before the Korean peninsula had been devastated and the Chinese Ming Dynasty had been fatally weakened.

- The Manchus invaded Korea twice during the middle of the 17th century (1627-1636) as part of their successful conquest of the East Asian mainland. Against its will, Korea was forced to sever its political ties to the failing Ming dynasty and establish a tributary relationship with the Ching (or Manchu) dynasty.

- In the Sino-Japanese War (1895), Japan defeated China and replaced it as the dominant foreign influence on the Korean peninsula and challenged China's claim to be the center of East Asian culture.

- The Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), also fought for the control of Korea, marked the first successful military defeat of a Western nation by a modern Asian state. Five years later Japan annexed the peninsula. Korea regained its independence, albeit as a divided nation at the end of World War II.

- Since the 1940's, Korea has been a major focus of East-West tensions. The Korean War (1950-1953), pitted North Korea and its allies (China and the Soviet Union) and South Korea and its allies (a contingent of U.N. forces headed by the United States) in a costly, inclusive struggle for domination of the peninsula. Although it began as a civil war, Korean War quickly evolved into symbol of superpower competition.

III Korea: Division and Reunification

A. SOUTH KOREA: MODERN ECONOMIC POWER

In the second half of the 20th century the face of South Korea has been radically altered, from a country devastated by civil war, to a modern nation proudly hosting the 1988 Olympics. The phenomenal growth of the South Korean economy has made it a ***Third World development success story***. At the same time, progress has been achieved at a ***high human cost*** because political progress has not kept pace with economic growth. ***Rapid social change*** has also resulted from industrialization. Recently, South Korea has made ***substantial progress toward a more democratic society*** although many problems remain to be solved.

1) A Third World development success story

In the early 1960s, South Korea shifted its industrial policy to one based on outward-looking, export-oriented industrialization strategies. Since then, its economy has performed remarkably well - so well, in fact, that the Four Tigers (Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong) are seen as newly-emerging challengers to the major economic powers. In the 1980s Korea began to experience trade friction with its long-time ally and important trading partner, the US. Characteristics of the Korean development pattern include:

a. Impressive rates of economic growth, as measured by such indicators as increases in both real GNP and per capita GNP, and increases in volume of exports to world market; rapid increase in productivity in the manufacturing sector, and with a gradual shift from light industry to medium and heavy industry.

b. Substantial growth of a new middle class, in contrast to the "marginalization" of large numbers of unemployed workers in other developing nations.

c. Interdependent relationship with the world economy. The decision to integrate the South Korean economy with the international market was vital in transforming the nation into an economic powerhouse.

Foreign capital has played a major role in stimulating economic growth but also saddled the nation with foreign debts. Recently, due to substantial trade surpluses, South Korea has been paying off its foreign creditors. Although South Koreans have been willing to accept interdependency in exchange for progress, many are concerned about how vulnerable their economy is to foreign economic forces.

d. High level of government involvement in the economy. Until the 1980's Korea had one of the free world's most tightly supervised economies. With Korea's debut as a major player in the world economy, however, official control over imports, finance, and investment has begun to relax. Pressures outside South Korea continue to push for a more complete integration with the world economy while internally, protectionism (particularly in the agricultural sector) continue to challenge the opening of Korean markets to foreign products.

2) High Human Costs

Korea's remarkable economic development has been based on export-oriented industrialization strategies, requiring the mobilization and incorporation of labor into the export sector of manufacturing. Until relatively recently, Korea has profited from a steady supply of skilled, motivated workers who were willing to work long hours for low wages.

A steady rise in the cost of living, however, as well as a relaxation of government control over organized labor, have increased labor costs until Korea can no longer compete as effectively as it did in the past. Some labor-intensive industries have relocated to other nations where wages are more competitive while others have turned to products requiring more skill and technical expertise to produce.

As elsewhere, semi-skilled workers have made the most sacrifices to make Korea an economic powerhouse. But times are changing. During the past decade Korean labor has "found its voice" and has began to flex its new political muscle. On several occasions, severe labor strife has stunned the economy. Recently, the government has attempted to act as a mediator of labor disputes instead of simply suppressing strikes as it did in the past. For the most part, the public is sympathetic with labor's desire to see that the fruits of progress are more evenly distributed. Many are concerned, however, that South Korea's fragile prosperity may be compromised in the quest for economic justice.

3) Rapid Social Change

Not surprisingly, South Korea's rapid economic development has resulted in the rapid transformation of Korean society. Two of the most significant changes that have stemmed from industrialization are ***urbanization*** and ***changes in family patterns***.

a. Urbanization: Urban-centered industrialization has stimulated the movement of Koreans to the cities. Until 1970, Korea was primarily an agrarian society, with over half of the population living in rural areas. Fifteen years later, three out of every four Koreans had become urbanites. Cities have grown larger -- Seoul is one of the ten largest cities in the world and, with 1/4 (c. 10 million people) of Korea's population, dominates the life of the nation. New industrial cities have also emerged, primarily on the southeast coast.

b. Changes in Family Patterns: The entrance of young women into the industrial work force has provided much of the labor for Korea's export industries. Changing patterns of women's work have been an important consequence of industrialization, and new patterns of women's work have gone together with changes in traditional Korean family patterns; Korean family size has gotten smaller and there are fewer families in which three generations live together.

4) Substantial progress toward a more democratic society

The foundations of Korea's economic boom were laid in the sixties by an authoritarian dictatorship

that seized power by force when Korea's first experiment with democracy under President Syngman Rhee failed in 1961. With support from South Korea's powerful military and generous amounts of American aid, President Park Chung Hee (1963-1975) was able to mobilize the resources and resolve needed to industrialize South Korea. The pace of economic progress, however, outstripped political evolution toward a more democratic form of government. Gradually, pressure for reform increased until the nation was plunged into political turmoil in the late seventies. South Korea suffered a major political setback when President Park was assassinated and another military strongman, President Chun Doo Hwan, seized control in 1980.

By the early 1980's Korea had become too affluent, too educated, and too politically sophisticated for military dictatorship. Unable to contain the rising tide of political discontent, the government yielded to demands for revision of the constitution in 1987. In 1988 South Korea experienced its first peaceful transfer of power when Chun turned over the reins of government to a popularly-elected president, Rho Tae Woo. Far different from his predecessors, President Rho faces a National Assembly where opposition legislators outnumber representatives from his own party. Although these changes have caused considerable economic and political dislocation, most agree that the rough-and-tumble of the democratic process is well worth the risk.

As South Korean society becomes more democratic, the concerns of special interests groups, including labor, religious sects, and women are being articulated like never before. Few would deny that historically, many subgroups have suffered systemic discrimination and have legitimate grievances that need to be addressed. These concerns are balanced, however, with the fear that social and political diversification is a real threat to Korea's Confucian heritage which tends to place a greater value on collective harmony and unity than on individuality. How to synthesize the best from the past and the present continues to be one of the major challenges confronting South Korea today.

B. NORTH KOREA: BASTION OF COMMUNISM AND SELF-RELIANCE

Americans probably know less about North Korea than almost any other country on earth. Nevertheless, within the communist community of nations, North Korea has carved out for itself a place that compares remarkably with the position South Korea holds in the free world. Even in an era where fundamental aspects of socialist economic theory are being questioned, North Korea projects itself as a ***model for socialist development.*** In contrast to the chronic political ferment in South Korea, the political leader of North Korea, Kim Il Sung, has held power longer than any living statesman. This has contributed to making North Korea one of the most ***politically stable*** nations in the third world. Under Kim's leadership, North Korea sees itself as a ***champion of self-reliance*** within the international community of nations.

1) Model for socialist development

After the division of Korea into two zones by American and Soviet forces in 1945, the communist northern sector of the peninsula capitalized on the industrial base built by the Japanese during the colonial period by transforming North Korea into a formidable economic and military power. When civil war broke out in 1950, South Korea proved no match for North. Massive infusions of men and material from the West were necessary to keep North Korea from overrunning the South.

Through mass mobilization and heroic sacrifices, North Korea recovered from the devastation of the Korean War to pursue its own socialist development. Although its economy has stagnated in recent decades along with the general malaise that has affected other socialist societies, it remains one of the few places where communism has been relatively successful.

2) Political stability

The charismatic leadership of Kim Il Sung has been a major factor in North Korean political stability for almost half a century. The intensity of the personality that has grown up around Kim is without parallel. Neither the cult of Stalin in the Soviet Union during the thirties and forties nor the cult of Mao in China during the sixties can compare to the intensity of the Kim Il Sung cult in North Korea.

The extreme stability of Kim's one-man government, however, is also its greatest liability. North Korea suffers from over-centralization and bureaucratic rigidity. As the aging strong-man approaches death, laying the foundations for a transfer of power to Kim's son, Kim Chong Il, has become a national obsession. Whether such a political succession can be achieved without a loss of political stability remains to be seen.

3) Champion of self-reliance

Under Kim Il Sung's inspiration, North Koreans have developed self-reliance (***Juche***) into a political philosophy for export to the third world. Suspicious of all foreign powers and wary of international alliances, North Korea projects itself as a champion of small, developing nations and is an active supporter of communist liberation movements in Africa and South America. Consonant with its doctrine of self-reliance, North Korea remains one of the most isolated nations in the world today. Unlike in the South, the North Korean economy is not oriented toward exports. Almost all of what it produces is consumed internally. Attempts to earn hard currency through trade have been only marginally successful. Except when North Korea sponsors international events, few foreigners are permitted to cross its borders. Once inside, visitors' activities are carefully monitored by official guides. This policy contrasts sharply with South Korea's openness to the outside world, further proof of the vast differences between the two halves of the peninsula today.

C. REUNIFICATION: THE COMMON DREAM

Despite the obvious ideological differences between North and South Korea, both share a ***common linguistic and ethnic heritage,*** a ***common history and culture,*** and a ***common dream for a reunified Korea.***

1) Common language and race

Koreans share a common language; Korean is an Altaic language, related to Turkic, Mongolian, and Japanese - but not to Chinese. Before its division into rival regimes, Korea in fact was relatively unusual in that it was a country where ethnic, linguistic, and national boundaries coincided. The population of Korea is homogeneous; evidence suggests Koreans originated in Inner Asia (along with the Turks and Mongols).

2) Common history and culture

Korea's recorded past extends back to references in Chinese texts as early as the 3rd century B.C.; its unitary history as a political entity dates from the founding of Unified Silla in 668 A.D.; its last dynasty, the Yi Dynasty, endured for 518 years, from its establishment in 1392 until the beginning of the Japanese Colonial Occupation, in 1910.

3) Common dream for a reunified Korea

The reunification of Korea promises to be an important issue in the 1990s. Although it is difficult to reconcile the passionate intensity with which Koreans argue that Korea is one country with the reality of two hostile regimes, people on both sides of the 38th parallel continue to be inspired by the dream of

a reunified Korea. The division dates from:

1945 - when Japan surrendered at the end of WWII to the Soviet Union in the north, and the United States in the south

1948 - when the two separate regimes, the Democratic Republic of Korea (south) and the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (north) emerged

1950 - when the Korean War began

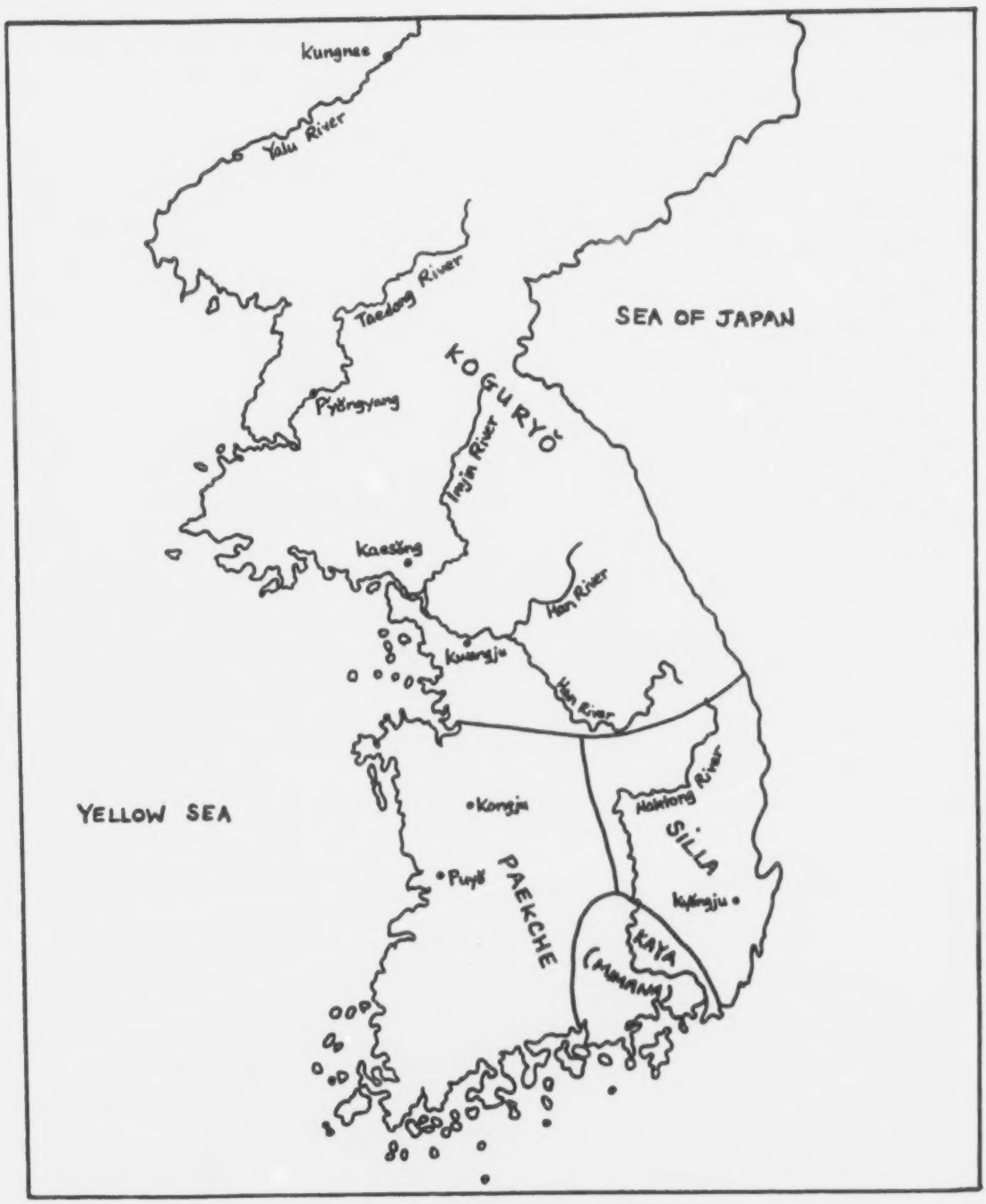
1953 - when the Korean War ended, with nothing solved, and the status quo - division of the country at the 38th parallel, into separate states - maintained today.

Historically, Korea has paid a high price as a cultural transformer and transmitter and a vortex of conflict. No calamity they have suffered so far, however, can compare to the agony of the division. Present successes not withstanding, Koreans will never be content until the political boundaries of their nation once more reflect the reality of what has always been for them one, unified Korea.

KOREAN HISTORY / A Chronological Outline

c.4000	**KULP'O** culture
c.3000	**CHULMUN** culture
c.2000	**CH'AEMUN** culture
c.1000	
	OLD CHOSON c.300
BC/AD	*North* Chinese Commanderies (c.108 BC to 313 AD) — *South* Samhan Federation (c.100 BC to c.280 AD)
250	Three Kingdoms c.280
	KOGORYU (37 BC - 668 AD) — PAEKCHE (18 BC - 663 AD) — SILLA (57 BC - 668 AD)
500	
	Unified SILLA 668-936
750	
	Later Three Kingdoms c.890-936
1000	
	KORYO 918-1392
1250	Mongol invasions & rule 1218-1356
	CHOSON (YI Dynasty) 1392-1897
	Regin of King Sejong 1418-1450
1500	
	Imjin Wars (Hideyoshi invasions) 1592-1598
	Manchu invasions 1627-1637
1750	Reigns of Yongjo & Chongjo 1724-1800
1900	
	Japanese Annexation 1910
	Soviet occupation 1945 American occupation
	DPRK 1948 ROK
	Korean War 1950-53

• 1989 Columbia University, East Asian Curriculum Project



THREE KINGDOMS PERIOD

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CONTEMPORARY KOREA

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EACP East Asian Curriculum Project

East Asian Institute/Columbia University
420 West 118 Street, New York, N.Y. 10027

© 1989 by The Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York